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Letter dated 30 April 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to send you the report of the fifteenth annual workshop for the newly elected members of the Security Council, which was held on 2 and 3 November 2017 at the Greentree Foundation in Manhasset, New York (see annex). The final report has been compiled in accordance with the Chatham House Rule under the sole responsibility of the Permanent Mission of Finland.

On the basis of the very positive feedback that we have received from the participants each year, the Government of Finland remains committed to sponsoring the workshop as an annual event. The Government of Finland hopes that the report will contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of the work of the Council.

I should be grateful, accordingly, if this report could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kai **Sauer**
Ambassador
Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 30 April 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

"Hitting the ground running": fifteenth annual workshop for newly elected members of the Security Council

2 and 3 November 2017

Greentree Foundation
Manhasset, New York

The Government of Finland, in conjunction with the School of International and Public Affairs of Columbia University and the Security Council Affairs Division of the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, convened the fifteenth annual workshop for the newly elected members of the Security Council on 2 and 3 November 2017.

For a decade and a half, the annual workshops have served two essential purposes. Since their inception, the workshops have been designed to help familiarize the newly elected members with the practices, procedures and working methods of the Security Council so that they would be prepared to "hit the ground running" when their terms on the Council commenced less than two months later. This founding purpose has never varied. Over time, a complementary purpose has emerged, as the workshops have provided current, as well as incoming, members with an unparalleled opportunity to reflect and compare views on the work of the Council in an informal and interactive setting. To encourage candid and searching exchanges, the sessions have been held under the Chatham House rule of non-attribution. To that end, the only speakers identified in the present report, prepared by Edward C. Luck of the School of International and Public Affairs of Columbia University, are those at the opening dinner.

The opening dinner, on 2 November, featured welcoming remarks by the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations, Kai Sauer, a keynote address by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres and closing remarks by the President of the Security Council and Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations, Sebastiano Cardi.

On 3 November, the full-day programme included round-table discussions among all participants on the following three themes:

(a) State of the Security Council 2017: taking stock and looking ahead (session I);

(b) Working methods and subsidiary bodies (session II);

(c) Lessons learned: reflections of the class of 2017 (session III).

Opening dinner

The Secretary-General addressed some of the changes in the international security environment over the 10 months since he took office. Three issues stood out in that regard. First, for the first time since the end of the Cold War, the nuclear threat was back as an urgent global concern. Unpredictable developments on the Korean Peninsula, as well as uncertainties about the future of arrangements related to Iran, posed a crisis for the Security Council. It was essential that the Council maintain its unity on those matters. Otherwise, we could be on a very dangerous path.

Second, the growing interconnectedness of the multiple crises in the Middle East had exacerbated the dangers that they represented for international peace and security. The persistent threat of global terrorism and signs of disintegration in some places demanded that the Council address those crises from a global perspective. Their linkages needed to be understood as part of a more strategic approach by the Council.

Third, cyber warfare had become a first-order thre. to international peace and security in ways that were not yet fully understood. Massive cyberattacks could well become the first step in the next major war. More thought needed to be devoted to how international humanitarian law should apply to cyber threats and, most immediately, to how the Council should anticipate, prevent and, if necessary, respond to such an urgent threat to global security.

In addition, the Secretary-General underscored the serious challenges to United Nations peacekeeping operations. Those ranged from force protection, including in asymmetrical environments, to the implementation of mandate financing, support and partnership with regional and subregional organizations. Clearly, he emphasized, it could not be "business as usual" for the Council in the year ahead.

In response, participants commented on a range of issues, including terrorism, climate change, cyber threats and conflict prevention. There was particular emphasis on finding ways for the Council to improve its working relations with the Secretary-General and to help forward his vision for a more effective United Nations, in particular in the realm of prevention. For Council members, this should be treated as their collective responsibility.

The following morning, at the opening of the workshop's three roundtable sessions, introductory comments were made by the Director of the Security Council Affairs Division of the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, Hasmik Egian, and by Edward C. Luck of the School of International and Public Affairs of Columbia University.

Session I
State of the Security Council 2017: taking stock and looking ahead

Moderator
Ambassador François Delattre
Permanent Representative of France

Commentators
Ambassador Tekeda Alemu
Permanent Representative of Ethiopia

Ambassador Michele J. Sison
Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States

Ambassador Petr V. Iliichev
First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation

The agenda for session I contained the following questions:

- How would you assess the performance of the Security Council to date in 2017 in terms of meeting its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security? Is it doing better or worse than in recent years? Why?
- What have been some of the high and low points of the Council's efforts this year? Where has agreement within the Council been easiest or most difficult to achieve?

- Which external obstacles and conditions have proved hardest to overcome? Overall, are the threats to international peace and security and the challenges faced by the Council growing or ebbing? How and why?

- Where — geographically and thematically — is the Council poised to make the most positive difference in 2018? Are there ready targets of opportunity? Where has the Council's work in 2017 provided a foundation on which newly elected and continuing members of the Council could build in 2018?

- At recent "Hitting the ground running" workshops, participants have often commented on the need to do better at conflict prevention. This has been a top priority for the Secretary-General as well.

  - Should the primary role of the Council in this regard be to support and facilitate the initiatives of the Secretary-General, regional and subregional arrangements and civil society or to undertake direct preventive action itself? Could it do both?

  - As a collective and political body, is the Council organized in a manner to conduct sustained and focused preventive measures? Are any of its subsidiary bodies? Should its working methods be adjusted in any way to facilitate its preventive role?

  - Which of its many tools, including under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, could be wielded most effectively in such situations? Has it made full use of the tools and capacities at its disposal? Why are Articles 34 and 99 of the Charter so rarely invoked? The Council's missions to various parts of the world, including five already in 2017, have served a range of purposes. Could they contribute more directly to a larger and more coherent conflict prevention strategy on the part of the Council?

  - In some situations, the Council has collaborated quite effectively with regional and subregional partners in forwarding preventive efforts. In other situations, this has proven to be difficult. Drawing on the lessons from this cumulative experience, are there ways that the Council and its partners could do a better and more consistent job of putting the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter into practice?

  - For more than a decade, the Council has held annual consultations with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, including in September 2017. Are there specific proposals that have emerged from these consultations that could enhance joint or collaborative efforts at conflict prevention?

- Members of the Council appear to have found common ground more readily on matters related to counter terrorism than on most other issues.

  - As Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as Da'esh) has been forced to cede much of the territory it has occupied, it appears that its threat may be becoming more diffuse, including through an emphasis on trying to inspire domestic terrorism. Would such a shift in tactics suggest adjustments in the way that the Council has framed its role in supporting global counter-terrorism efforts?

  - Where has the Council's counter-terrorism work proved most or least effective? How successful have been its undertakings related to terrorist financing and recruitment? What further steps are needed? Could it do more to facilitate capacity-building, information sharing or transnational and regional collaboration?

– In 2018, where might new opportunities emerge for collaboration in countering terrorism? Should the Council consider specific steps in 2018 to implement provisions of resolution 2347 (2017) concerning the protection of cultural heritage?

• There is every reason to expect that non-proliferation will again be a defining issue for the Council in 2018.

– In terms of the threat posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea through its development both of nuclear weapons and of ballistic delivery systems, how might the Council act to ensure the full implementation of the new rounds of sanctions it has imposed in recent months? How could it reinforce the credibility of its messaging to the leaders of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea? Should a path to a diplomatic solution be kept open by the Council and, if so, how?

– Unity within the Council was critical to the achievement of the agreements with Iran. At this point, could the Council have a role in insuring that the letter and spirit of those agreements are respected? Or is this an issue on which the Council is more likely to be a spectator than a player for the foreseeable future?

• United Nations peacekeeping operations are under strain financially, strategically and operationally. In recent years, the Council has improved its consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries, but could more be done in that regard? Should it do more to improve its oversight, to periodically review the effectiveness of individual missions, and to reassess the utility of some operations that have been deployed for decades? Could it take additional steps to ensure the accountability of its military, police and civilian personnel for their personal conduct in the field?

• With increasing frequency, the Council has included civilian protection provisions in its decisions and mandates. Yet disrespect for core tenets of international humanitarian law and human rights standards both by Governments and by non-State armed groups appears to be growing, whether in Syria, Yemen, South Sudan or Myanmar. In October, the Council is addressing women, peace and security and children and armed conflict, as well as conflict-related famine in Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan and elsewhere.

– What could be done in 2018, by newly elected and continuing members, to reverse the tide of indifference to atrocity crimes and serious abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law?

– Likewise, given the growing gap between words and deeds on these matters, how should the Council act in 2018 to begin to restore its credibility on the range of human protection issues that it regularly addresses?

– The wide-ranging discussion in session I considered various assessments of the performance of the Council in 2017, challenges ahead in 2018 and ways of sharpening its tools to better meet them.

Assessment of the performance of the Council in 2017

2017, a participant noted, had had its share both of high points and of frustrations. Getting the assessment right was essential given the Council's onerous responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. According to another speaker, the non-permanent members, because they had been elected by two thirds of the Member States, also have a mandate and obligation to sustain their contacts with the larger membership of the Organization. In making assessments of the Council's performance, commented one interlocutor, the members should keep in

mind the difficulty of their task and not mix views about how often the Council succeeds or fails with debates about the need for reform.

On the positive side of the balance sheet, one discussant identified supporting the peace process in Colombia, ensuring accountability for Da'esh and achieving unity on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as the Council's three biggest successes to date in 2017. Another speaker pointed to the wide support within the Council on critical questions of stemming the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, of countering terrorism and of facilitating a range of peace processes around the world. The termination of peace operations in Haiti, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone was another sign of progress. The visit by members of the Council to the Sahel had provided valuable insights into the important work there. Given those successes to date in 2017, it would be timely to consider what lessons might be drawn from them for the Council's future work. One interlocutor stressed that not all was doom and gloom, as the members of the Council, including the permanent members, had demonstrated a great sense of responsibility in adopting additional sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, most recently through Council resolution 2375 (2017). There was a strong consensus within the Council on the goal of achieving the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. There was no room for complacency, as the situation posed serious dangers for the whole international community, as well as for the region.

In terms of forwarding non-proliferation objectives, underscored one participant, the unity within the Council on dealing with the threats posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should be seen as a big success. The adoption of two resolutions and new sanctions in 2017, on top of two earlier resolutions in 2016, was critical to showing the regime in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea the economic and political costs that it would have to pay if it continued down the current path. The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) was doing a good job of overseeing the implementation of the sanctions imposed by the Council on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. To achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, stressed another speaker, the Council should continue to take a comprehensive, not selective, approach, encompassing sanctions, diplomacy and humanitarian measures. The goal should be a diplomatic solution that achieved the full implementation of the Council's resolutions.

In the view of one participant, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was the best possible basis for addressing the question of Iran's nuclear ambitions. It was a success for the Council and showed the value of approaching such matters through multilateral processes. It was essential, added another discussant, for the Council to continue to display unity on the implementation of the Plan of Action and the relevant Council resolutions. There existed a good foundation for dealing with the Iran nuclear question and a need to avoid selective approaches that would undermine the key message that the international community would be united on the long path of implementation. It should be recognized that the members of the Council had made important progress on non-proliferation matters and that they needed to continue to work together.

The backbone of international peace and security, it was said, lay in countering terrorism and stemming the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. As long as the Council managed to maintain its unity on those matters, it would be able to focus serious attention on other important issues as well. Unity was essential to countering terrorism, both globally and regionally, commented another speaker, and the Council should be proud of how much it had accomplished in that area. It had adopted strong resolutions aimed at countering terrorist narratives, at strengthening judicial tools, at preventing the use of the internet and other communications technology for terrorist

purposes and at preventing the acquisition of weapons by terrorists. Incoming members should plan to be very active in pursuing that portfolio.

A participant underscored the value of the Council's resolution 2379 (2017) on Da'esh accountability and of the investigative team established by it as a mechanism for the Iraqi people to begin to find a measure of accountability. The sanctions regime established by resolution 1267 (1999) remained an effective operational tool, and the Council had held very useful debates on foreign terrorist fighters. In the view of another speaker, regional efforts in Central Asia to counter terrorism, aided by the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, had proved the value of regional approaches to fighting terrorism. Those efforts could be emulated elsewhere.

The Council had accomplished much in the area of peacekeeping reform in 2017, according to one discussant, who noted the closure of missions that had completed their mandates, the retooling of some mandates to make them more realistic, the review of the deployment of human and material resources and a focus on how to enhance civilian protection. Interactions with troop- and police-contributing countries had been expanded, while the effort to make peacekeeping operations both more efficient and more effective continued. Peace operations should support political solutions, and Council members should ensure realistic mandates and the enunciation of exit strategies. Particular efforts had been made to enhance the way that the United Nations Mission in South Sudan pursued its civilian protection mandate. Efforts had been under way to make missions more accountable when it comes to sexual exploitation and abuse. Attention had also been devoted to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of special political missions.

One participant contended that peacekeeping operations tended to be most successful when there was a sense of national ownership and the host country demonstrated an interest by actively engaging in and supporting the operational activities of the mission concerned. That had been the case in Haiti, Colombia and Côte d'Ivoire, all of which had proceeded well. Prevention should also be a centrepiece of Council efforts, although much of the Council's work involved situations where prevention had failed. Sometimes, as in Libya, interventions had been undertaken in the name of preventing atrocities and protecting human rights, but had quite different results. Members of the Council should consider the larger impact on the region. One speaker agreed that the Council had achieved positive results in Colombia because it maintained a sense of unity and commitment there. According to another interlocutor, through the Council's involvement and the good work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, the Council had put the country in a better position than when it started. Likewise, the Council's engagement and support for the peace process in Colombia had had a positive impact.

It was suggested that peace operations had been employed successfully by the Council as a tool for conflict prevention. The mandate review in 2017 of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon — the first since 2006 — illustrated the point, as it led to proactive steps to deter further hostile activity by Hezbollah and to the adoption of a stronger text for future renewals of the mandate. There had been progress in terms of the operational reform of peacekeeping, agreed one speaker, but the undertaking of strategic reviews had also proven very useful. In the view of one interlocutor, the Council's peacekeeping achievements in 2017 included progress in Colombia and in Africa.

One participant lauded the Council's willingness to consider new challenges to international peace and security, such as the protection of cultural heritage. The increasing employment of a wider range of formats had permitted the exploration of new subjects and the introduction of fresh voices and perspectives. There had also

been an enhanced understanding of the role of regional arrangements in peacekeeping, such as in the Lake Chad Basin and in the Sahel. Collaboration with regional partners should be a priority in the coming year. According to another discussant, the deliberations within the Council on children and armed conflict and on sexual exploitation and abuse had been more productive than in the previous two years.

Among the encouraging developments in 2017, noted one speaker, had been greater activism among the 10 elected members. Although they did not agree on everything, they recognized the need to try to break the political deadlocks among the permanent members. Incoming members should be cognizant of how important their role could be in ensuring the effectiveness of the Council. Likewise, there had been closer collaboration among the three members of the Council from Africa. They sought to forward the interests of all African countries, as well as those of the larger membership of the United Nations. One interlocutor agreed that the three members had played a constructive role within the Council and that the capacity of African institutions and Member States to prevent and contain conflicts had been growing, even as the portion of the Council agenda devoted to situations in Africa had been shrinking. At times, however, there had been insufficient coordination of initiatives coming from Africa, something that should be remedied in the future.

Despite many heated debates, one participant asserted that there were some encouraging signs concerning the Council's stance towards the crisis in Syria. There was a growing recognition that there must be a political, not a military, solution. There had been progress on chemical weapons disarmament, protection of cultural heritage and humanitarian issues. There were new avenues for discussions with regard to a peaceful settlement and the Council could give them political support. There was no doubt that the strength of the Council derived from the degree of its unity, commented another speaker. That must always be the goal.

On the negative side, it was stressed that, over the course of 2017, the search for common ground had often been frustrating. Divisions had prevented the Council from stopping the bloodshed in Syria or from exercising effective conflict prevention in Myanmar. The Council needed to promote more positive dynamics in places such as South Sudan, Yemen and Burundi. The Council would accomplish nothing if it kept prescribing analgesics for terminally ill patients. In the view of another participant, the Council was less effective than it had been at the end of the twentieth century, when the use of chemical weapons had been unthinkable and mass atrocities were not so commonplace. The Council had more tools now, but what lessons had its members learned and what could newly elected members do to improve the situation?

Throughout 2017, commented one speaker, the high degree of mistrust among the major powers had affected everything that the Council tried to do. Incoming members should understand that they would not be able to take positions solely on the merits of the case. The major powers must find ways of developing greater trust so that the Council could act in a more consistently pragmatic manner. The deep divides over Syria remained and there was no peaceful solution in sight. After six years of conflict, the political track had made little progress and the humanitarian situation was dire. The Council had said very little about the destructive conflict in Yemen, although the United Nations had stressed the extent of the humanitarian calamity there. It appeared to be a case of "the tail wagging the dog". It was puzzling that the Council was paralysed and could not find unity when dealing with South Sudan. The Council's handling of the situation over the past 10 months had been tragic, when it should have been a case of "low-hanging fruit" in terms of the possibilities for effective conflict resolution by the Council. Even on counter-terrorism, the Council's performance had been disappointing. There appeared to be greater coordination and cooperation among terrorist groups than among the States

pledged to counter them. That had been seen this every day and it was not sufficient for States to rely on unilateral action.

The Council was established to serve as an emergency response mechanism, according to one discussant, but now had too many crises on its agenda, plus a host of thematic issues ranging from human rights to climate change to gender and famine. All of that required much time and attention, yet did not necessarily have much effect on the ground. In terms of non-proliferation, the members were united on sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea but the Council had not paid sufficient attention to crafting a diplomatic and political solution, when it was obvious that military action would be disastrous for the region. Similarly, the members had been united in wanting to curb the flow of refugees from Myanmar and to prevent an escalation of tensions in Burundi. Pressure tactics, however, could make things worse in both situations. Constructive engagement would be a better choice.

It was suggested that the Council had not spent enough time on developing a sustainable and more strategic approach to individual crises, given the number of situations and thematic issues on its agenda. Generally, root causes had received little attention in Council deliberations. Tools such as peace operations and sanctions were often employed without sufficient thought for a larger political strategy or for longer-term consequences.

There needed to be accountability for the humanitarian calamities in Syria and Yemen, stressed one participant. If the Council was unwilling or unable to provide it, then other organs, such as the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council, would step in to provide it. The core problem, according to another speaker, was the lack of trust within the Council. A deeper and more sustained dialogue was needed among the members, in particular the permanent members, and perhaps the elected members could help promote that. One discussant commented that it was the place of diplomats to see the glass half full and to work to overcome the problems created by mistrust.

Challenges ahead

Non-proliferation, it was underscored, would be a defining challenge for the Council in 2018 and beyond. It affected everyone's security, so how could the members address it together? The risks posed by further proliferation would be great for the world, as well as for the region, noted one speaker, who stressed that the Council would need to grapple with the threat for the remainder of 2017, as well as in 2018. One interlocutor suggested that the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, along with the Middle East and cyber security (the questions highlighted by the Secretary-General the previous night), would be priorities for the Council for years to come. In the words of another participant, non-proliferation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would remain front and centre on the Council's agenda in 2018. The members came together in 2017 on the strongest set of sanctions yet, but now it would be critical to get everyone around the world to fully implement those sanctions. A core task would be to convince the leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that there were real consequences to their provocative actions.

One speaker contended that the credibility of the Council was on the line when it came to non-proliferation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The regime had acquired nuclear weapons and the task now was to actually change the status quo and get it to turn around and change course decisively. The threat of proliferation in Iran was different, in that the Government still claimed that its programme was solely for peaceful purposes and that it was not seeking to be a nuclear power. But the two situations were related, in that a failure in either case

would have negative effects on the other. With Iran, the members of the Council needed to make the existing agreement work, while persuading the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reach an agreement to reverse course.

In the view of one participant, the Council's credibility had already been diminished because of developments in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Syria and the reluctance of members to accept the realities of those situations. One could talk about the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the unacceptability of nuclear weapons there, but the fact was that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had become a nuclear State. Likewise, although some members would prefer otherwise, the Assad regime remained in power and controlled much of the country. In both cases, it would be hard to pursue a diplomatic and political solution without acknowledging the realities on the ground.

Non-proliferation challenges were not limited to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran, noted one speaker, as the goal of making the Middle East a sustainable nuclear weapon-free zone had not been achieved, and the wider absence of security guarantees and assurances was of broader concern. In 2018, there would be another non-proliferation treaty review conference and the world could not afford to have two failures in a row. The Security Council should find a way of speaking and acting to support the Treaty and the review process. That was an issue on which the members must speak with a unified voice. According to one discussant, despite their differences on other matters, the major powers should come together on the effort to prevent additional countries from acquiring nuclear weapons. They needed to do a better job of speaking with one voice on the question, so that others would not even think about seeking weapons of mass destruction. Perhaps the incoming and other non-permanent members could help build greater trust within the Council on that challenge. Two families of issues — non-proliferation and counter-terrorism — would largely define the Council's work in 2018, concluded another participant.

Echoing the comments by the Secretary-General the previous night, one speaker stressed the importance of finding unity on dealing with cyber security. A comprehensive approach was needed that took into account the ways in which new technologies were being used for the incitement, recruitment and financing of terrorism. Given some differences among Council members about the right approach, it would be important to begin with a thorough discussion of how to promote common action on that increasingly critical dimension of peace and security.

Peacekeeping reform should be a priority in 2018, according to one interlocutor, with particular attention to improving performance on the ground with regard to civilian protection, humanitarian access and conflict prevention. Peacekeeping was not just an end unto itself. One speaker noted that the Council would need to devote increasing attention to the vulnerability of peacekeeping forces, as it was not acceptable that they should be "sitting ducks" in the face of attacks. Also, although consent from the host Government was important, the Council should be wary of situations in which Governments and armed groups perpetrated one-sided violence against populations. It was regrettable that the Council had not been able to agree on a press statement on the important preventive work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia for the previous three years, noted one participant. It was to be hoped that that could be rectified in 2018.

Consensus on chemical weapons had been hard to find, commented one speaker, and it would be a continuing challenge in the weeks and months to come. A series of thematic issues, such as water security and human rights, would also face the Council. Those, too, did not always command a ready consensus. Such cross-cutting issues needed to be addressed by the Council, although it was important to bear in mind that they might also be issues of interest to the General Assembly and the Economic and

Social Council. According to one interlocutor, questions of water security were of existential importance to their country. Another participant pointed to the linkages among food, water and security as critical to the Council's work. The trip to the Lake Chad Basin underlined the connections between famine and terrorism. Man-made famines there, and in South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, could well fuel terrorism. Transborder diseases would also be a challenge. More broadly, a better understanding was needed of the tools for improving humanitarian access and of the connections between humanitarian and security challenges.

One participant expressed the hope that incoming members would share the widespread opposition to the use of chemical weapons in Syria, which would be a continuing concern for the Council. Without a doubt, it was emphasized, the continuing tragedy in Syria would occupy a great deal of the Council's attention in 2018. Newly elected members should be prepared for this. A speaker suggested that the Council's priorities in Syria, in addition to curbing the employment of chemical weapons, should include advancing a political solution, defeating ISIS and improving humanitarian access. Regretting that the Council had not been speaking with a single voice on the use of chemical weapons in Syria, one discussant stressed that the Council should at the very least do what it said it would do. In the case in question, it would need to follow up on its resolution, in which it had stipulated there would be Chapter VII measures if the use of chemical weapons was repeated.

Although the Council was still spending more time on African situations than on those in other regions, it was noted that there had been a marked increase in the amount of attention devoted to the Middle East. Incoming members should bear that in mind and plan accordingly. It was becoming more difficult, as well, to draw a dividing line between developments on the Arabian Peninsula and those on the Horn of Africa and elsewhere on the continent. That was posing new challenges for the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and individual African countries, as well as for the Council.

It was underscored that there were a number of places where the Council needed to do better in 2018. On Yemen, there needed to be a better understanding of the motivations of the players on the ground, as well as of ways to boost both the political process and the humanitarian process. On South Sudan, the Council needed to send a clear message that the Council expected both the Government and the opposition to participate constructively in the peace process and remained ready to take action against those who refused to do so. On the Sahel, the Council needed to speak with a more unified voice about how to conduct the battle against violent extremism and for enhanced security. The critical point was that the Council needed to remain deeply engaged with the region in 2018.

In the view of one discussant, the effectiveness of the Council on prevention and peacekeeping had been diminished by differences among both permanent and non-permanent members on specific situations. For instance, there had been divergent views on how to prevent the violence and atrocities in Myanmar. There had been distinct voices within the Council, as well, on how to conduct peacekeeping in South Sudan. Without a unified voice, the Council would continue to see its effectiveness dampened in 2018. When the Council did manage to produce a unified position, moreover, there needed to be follow-up, accountability and consequences. Otherwise, its credibility would continue to ebb in the coming year and it would come, more and more, to resemble little more than a talking shop. The loss of relevance and credibility was a real problem, commented a participant, not only for the Council but for ad hoc and regional arrangements as well.

The Council remained in a central position in terms of trying to maintain international peace and security, noted one discussant. That was not only a big burden,

but also raised very high expectations, given the wide range of issues confronting the Council. It took time to try to find common positions on so many issues, and some patience was required. In the view of another discussant, the Council was of critical importance to the larger effort to shape a new multipolar world order, as well as to maintaining international peace and security. It was important to focus on the Council's core mandate, which imposed a huge responsibility both on continuing and on incoming members. One discussant asked whether other members would welcome efforts by elected members, including incoming members, to build bridges when tension was high within the Council on some issues. That was a key question, responded a speaker, both among the five permanent members and among the 10 elected members. Finding unity, noted one interlocutor, also required renouncing national positions on some of the issues before the Council in the search for common positions. That would be a challenge for each of the incoming members in 2018. According to one participant, the unprecedented accumulation of complex crises made the role of the Council more demanding and more critical than ever before. Unity and credibility would be key to a successful year ahead.

Sharpening tools

One participant posed a series of questions about ways in which the Council's tools could be enhanced and sharpened. Given that the Council needed to do better at conflict prevention, which tools could be improved or invented to assist its efforts to that end? Could the Council's means of countering terrorism be enhanced, for instance through fuller and more timely exchanges of intelligence or closer strategic coordination? In the ongoing efforts to make peacekeeping more effective, what could be done to bolster partnerships between the United Nations and regional partners? What means could be explored to better fulfil the Council's responsibility to protect civilian populations?

According to one discussant, there were a range of things the Council could do to reinforce its conflict prevention capacities. Some worthwhile efforts to enhance them were already under way. More thought could be given to employing sanctions as a means of ensuring accountability. Some violators of international standards were prone to invoke sovereignty, but there was a reason that the founders of the world body gave the Council enforcement powers under Chapter VII of the Charter. Those tools, however, were easier to wield in cases of inter-State conflict. Complex situations were now requiring the Council to coordinate more closely with other bodies, including the Peacebuilding Commission, funds and programmes. Attention needed to be paid to root causes, as well as to the nexus among humanitarian challenges, sustainable development and peace. The Council was moving in that direction, but more could be done. Commenting that prevention was at the core of the Council's work, one speaker pointed to the good work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and urged serious consideration of the Secretary-General's proposals to expand the number of regionally based conflict prevention centres. One participant noted the utility of field missions by the Council for enhancing understanding, but asked how the results could be more fully utilized in the deliberations of the Council.

It was suggested that reviews of peacekeeping and sanctions should not be isolated from a larger vision of how to strengthen the Council's strategies for maintaining international peace and security. They could usefully be informed, as well, by the Secretary-General's emerging vision of reform in the peace and security realm and by efforts within the Council to reform sanctions mechanisms. According to one discussant, a lack of transparency in the work of sanctions committees threatened to undermine the effectiveness of the Council's joint work on countering terrorism. Another speaker contended that sanctions were only one of many tools at

the Council's disposal and they should not be used as a hammer against host countries, a practice that could produce unintended effects.

One participant questioned the utility of public consultations, other than as a means of demonstrating transparency. Briefers tended to be less candid in open sessions and members were tempted to "speak to the gallery". For all the limitations of consultations, they at least offered some opportunity to be more candid and forthcoming. One discussant agreed that there was a tendency to employ open formats for domestic and national agendas. Closed consultations could be particularly valuable when special representatives, envoys, and advisers (special representatives) of the Secretary-General were briefing the Council. In those cases, an open and candid exchange might risk damaging relationships with host or neighbouring countries. How open should one be in open sessions in the Chamber, asked one interlocutor? What had been the lessons of recent experience in that regard? According to another speaker, striking the right balance between public and private discussions was a matter of continuing concern to the members of the Council, as practice was evolving.

It was asserted that the best means for enhancing the Council's leverage and increasing its effectiveness would be to strengthen its sense of unity, of particular importance in the struggle against terrorism. It was a matter on which the common interests of the members should produce greater unity in action than had been achieved to date. According to one participant, the veto power was a tool of global governance, not just a technical procedure, and one should be cautious about proposals that called for the five permanent members to agree on certain matters before they were even brought to the Council. Likewise, seeking votes on draft resolutions on which there was disagreement could have negative effects on the prospects for resolving those situations. One discussant stressed that all of the members were there for the same reason: to help the Council fulfil its critical responsibilities under the Charter. There was room for improvement in the search for unity, as sometimes differences arose even when the issues at stake were not of vital interest to the members concerned. Incoming members should bear in mind the importance of personal relationships in pursuing the work of the Council. With the accumulation of so many complex crises on the Council's agenda, the personal equation was all the more critical.

Session II
Working methods and subsidiary bodies

Moderator
Ambassador Carl Skau
Alternate Representative of Sweden to the Security Council

Commentators
Minister Counsellor Pedro Luis Inchauste Jordán
Chargé d'Affaires of the Plurinational State of Bolivia

Ambassador Matthew Rycroft
Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom

The agenda for session II included the following questions:

- The adoption of the note by the President of the Security Council dated 30 August 2017 (S/2017/507), a revised version of the note by the President contained in document S/2010/507, was a major accomplishment. Its content captures much of the progress that has been made in recent years in refining the working methods of the Council. Many of these steps have been the subject of focused discussion at past "Hitting the ground running" workshops. The question now, of course, is "what comes next?"

- Should the focus in 2018 be on bringing practice into more consistent conformity with the points articulated in the revised note (S/2017/507), or on identifying additional areas in which further refinements might be considered?

- How could newly elected members contribute most constructively to moving the process forward in 2018? To what extent do permanent and non-permanent members share similar perspectives on further steps to improve the working methods of the Council?

- What priorities should the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions pursue in 2018? Are there suggestions about where it could make the most difference in the months ahead?

• One of the recurring topics of recent workshops, and also the subject of notes by the President (S/2016/170 and S/2016/619), has been the selection process for the chairs of the Council's subsidiary organs and the support and preparation that they receive prior to joining the Council.

- Has sufficient progress been made towards implementing the notes? Are there areas in which further refinements are needed?

- According to paragraph 113 of document S/2017/507, this informal process of consultations will be undertaken in a balanced, transparent, efficient and inclusive way. Have these standards been met consistently?

- The shift to an earlier date for the election of members of the Council has provided greater opportunities to ensure that incoming chairs of subsidiary bodies are well prepared for these often demanding assignments. Has the extended process worked well in practice? Are there ways in which it could be improved?

• Paragraphs 78–82 of document S/2017/507 address the informal practice of having one or more members act as penholders to facilitate the drafting of Council documents, another topic that has been the subject of much discussion at past workshops.

- Has the emphasis on flexibility and inclusiveness expressed in paragraphs 78–82 been sufficiently reflected in practice?

- Under what circumstances does it make the most sense to have co-penholders lead the drafting process? In which situations has it worked especially well?

- At what point should newly elected members indicate an interest in assuming the responsibility of serving as a penholder or co-penholder? How and to whom should such an interest be expressed?

• It appears that Council members have been open to employing a wider range of meeting formats in recent years. As noted in paragraph 21 of document S/2017/507, the indicators of flexibility — with the choice of format depending on what is to be accomplished and what voices should be heard — have been admirable, but it may be time for some stocktaking.

- Has practice simply evolved in the direction of more diverse formats or has it been the product of a more strategic and systematic reflection? Should there be a collective assessment of which formats are working for which purposes, in part to better inform incoming members?

- In document S/2017/507, the conduct of informal consultations of the whole, another recurring topic of past workshops, is discussed in detail. With all the attention that the topic has generated, has there been significant progress

towards making the sessions more informal, more interactive and more valuable? Why or why not?

- In recent years, the expanded use of high-level meetings and Arria formula meetings suggests that the members see utility in both ends of the formality-informality spectrum. Why is this and what should newly elected members expect in 2018–2019?

- Open debates, as acknowledged in paragraph 38 of document S/2017/507, serve multiple purposes, but questions about their conduct and utility have also been raised pointedly in recent workshops. Could more be done to enhance their value, whether they address situation-specific or thematic concerns? More strategically, has the move away from private meetings lessened the opportunities for candid exchange among Council members even as it has served the goals of transparency and inclusiveness?

- The proliferation of subsidiary bodies has ended as several groups have completed their mandates, but questions remain about capacity, about why some bodies have been more active than others, about unanimity rules and about the relation between the Council as a whole and the subsidiary organs.

- In paragraph 101 of document S/2017/507, the members of the Council encourage the chairs of all subsidiary bodies to continue to report to the Council on any outstanding issues, in part to receive strategic guidance from the Council. In practice, have both sides of the equation been followed consistently?

- In paragraph 95 of document S/2017/507, the members of the Council acknowledges the importance of maintaining communication with the Peacebuilding Commission. As noted in past workshops, however, the relationship between the Council and the Commission, which was established as both a subsidiary body of and an advisory body to the Council (as well as the General Assembly), has never met expectations. What, if anything, should be done about this?

Goals and assessment of the "507 process" on the Council's working methods

The working methods of the Council, it was pointed out, should be related to content and objectives. Form and procedures should follow what the members were trying to do and the way in which they were trying to do it. There had been a tendency to talk more about how something was done than about what was sought to be accomplished. According to one participant, procedural knowledge might be critical to the expression of power within the Council, while understanding the Council's methods of work was essential to political coordinators and elected members. In that regard, document S/2017/507 was an invaluable document. Procedures were not a goal in and of themselves, but were important tools for permitting elected members to serve efficiently and effectively in the work of the Council, both as incoming members and as chairs of subsidiary bodies. One discussant underscored the value of document S/2017/507 as a consolidated document, as a contribution to transparency and as an equalizer. It was critical that all members, permanent and non-permanent, operated under the same set of rules and procedures. In the view of one speaker, the preparation of document S/2017/507 had benefited from statements made during the open debate on working methods. The extent of its ultimate value would now lie in its implementation. In that regard, one interlocutor commented that there would be a smooth turnover of the leadership of the Informal Working Group and that a plan and programme of action were being prepared for 2018 and beyond.

Meetings and consultations

At the previous workshop, in 2016, there had been considerable discussion about ways to make consultations more interactive, noted one discussant. There had been attempts to introduce a rule to allow members to follow up immediately where a point was directly related to what the previous speaker had said and to encourage briefer statements. Given the Council's immense responsibilities, the members needed to find ways of making it more effective and more capable of making a difference. Meetings needed to be well prepared and workshop participants should agree today that every meeting, whether formal or informal, should have an operational outcome, even if that was press elements only. Members should do a better job of setting priorities in the light of the Council's broad agenda and limited capabilities. If no operational outcome could be identified for a given item, perhaps members should not pursue it. Moreover, it should be regular practice to meet with parties and other stakeholders before every meeting. That would boost the legitimacy, as well as the effectiveness, of the Council. One participant commented that a "do no harm" rule should apply when it came to openness. When there were differences of view, it could be more productive to address them in private first in an effort to narrow gaps before a public "airing" of them.

One speaker posited that principles of interactivity, action orientation, and transparency should guide the convening of all Council meetings. Shorter interventions, less reliance on speaking notes and active facilitation could all contribute to interactivity in consultations. There might be some trade-offs between transparency and interactivity, but the greatest need was to increase the amount of engagement among the members. In that regard, there might be times when it would be helpful to have permanent representatives engaged at an earlier point in the negotiation of resolution texts, in part in an effort to identify possible points of agreement. In terms of an action orientation, meetings should not be convened just because that was what had been done before. It should be asked whether there would be any actionable outcome and it should be ensured beforehand that everyone knew what that might be. Briefers should have strict time limits. It was necessary to think critically before convening a meeting, to enlist the assistance of the President in setting priorities and to look to agreement on press elements, even on controversial issues. Regarding transparency, speaking in the public chamber was only one possible step. When private discussions were held in the Consultations Room, others should be informed of the meeting and what was hoped to be accomplished through it. A better job could be done of keeping others apprised of how negotiations were proceeding.

The Council's employment of a range of meeting formats, commented one participant, had evolved significantly. The possible trade-off between transparency and effectiveness was considered during the negotiation of document S/2017/507, and it was recognized that there were more opportunities for interactivity during informal consultations than in formal meetings. Ways should be found to make informal consultations more transparent to the wider membership. Whenever possible, press elements should be sought from meetings, even though agreement on the latter could be time consuming and needed to be done more efficiently. Open debates allowed the wider membership to participate in the Council's work, perhaps easing the perception that the Council tended to be divorced from broader debates within the Organization. In open formats, there had often been losses of interactivity and efficiency, although it had sometimes been possible to get briefers to answer any questions there might be in open sessions. It was a matter of balance among openness, interactivity and effectiveness. It could be useful for members of the Council to make statements in open debates, although perhaps their procedures could be modified to make them more efficient and less time consuming.

One discussant commented that their delegation had been more enthusiastic about open debates before joining the Council, but had since become much less so. The question was whether a particular open meeting had a purpose and likely outcome. Reporting cycles were not sufficient justification for a meeting. According to one interlocutor, it was one thing to believe in transparency and another to "go around in the nude". Open debates were a waste of time and money and should be eliminated. If they were so important, why did Ambassadors not stay in the room? Did Council members really listen or incorporate anything from those debates into the ongoing work of the Council? Members should speak candidly to the larger membership about finding a better format. The substance of meetings in the chamber and of those in the Consultations Room should be complementary, not repetitive, with the latter offering a chance to prepare for the former, but too often everyone read short papers in consultations and then repeated those points in the chamber. The Council should bring specially affected countries into the Consultations Room, instead of talking about them in their absence. Also, newly elected members should be wary of thinking that anything said in the Consultations Room would remain confidential. It had never been clear why some matters, such as Western Sahara and Lebanon, were considered too sensitive to be addressed in open meetings, while other equally sensitive topics were routinely discussed in public.

There could be improvements in the way open debates were conducted, such as reducing speaking times, presenting summaries in advance, and focusing on specific proposals, noted one speaker, but it should not be forgotten that they provided the only means of having a relationship with the Council for most delegations. Observing informal consultations had revealed how little interactivity there was, but perhaps it would be helpful to know in advance what the purpose of the meeting was to be. According to one discussant, the lack of interactivity in consultations had been disappointing, but it was not true that every word escaped the room — just most of them. Sometimes open debates could serve a purpose when a number of non-members of the Council pressed for them, although the level of attendance tended to be quite low. Arria formula meetings were often better attended and had the advantage of including inputs from a wider range of briefers from inside and outside of the Organization. To obtain the view of the country concerned, one possibility had been to have the Council President meet with its permanent representative beforehand.

In terms of the utility of open debates, commented one interlocutor, a line should be drawn between transparency and theatrics. Open debates and open briefings could become opportunities for show. There were other formats, such as informal interactive dialogues, in which the Council could both present itself in a better light and gain a wider range of inputs. These could be used more often and more strategically to engage with those closest to any particular portfolio. Informal events, such as dinners with key special representatives of the Secretary-General, could be a useful way to listen as well as to engage. One participant asserted that putting 15 ambassadors around a dinner table tended to work, while seating them around the table in the Consultations Room did not. Following this exchange, perhaps members could be more interactive in consultations the following week. The operational conclusions sought should guide Council deliberations. Using consultations as a forum to negotiate press elements was not a good use of time, so it would make more sense to trust the Presidency on such things. According to another speaker, members needed to remind themselves to be in receive mode, not just transmit mode, in all types of meeting formats. There had been some valuable open debates, such as on children and armed conflict, when there was much to listen to, and it was important to obtain alternative perspectives, but organizers should take care to find effective messengers as briefers. In terms of confidentiality in consultations, it was wise always to be prepared for transparency.

One participant urged incoming members to listen and be interactive. Not only during open debates, but also during consultations, participants came and went. It was much appreciated when delegates took the time to listen to each other. At the same time, one should have the courage not to speak. Everyone felt an obligation to speak in consultations, even if they did not have anything new to add. If one had to speak, the goal should be to be brief and not redundant. Regarding the frequency of meetings, one discussant commented that, beyond those required by resolutions, there had been a tendency to have too many on some topics, as had been the case on Darfur. In terms of the number of open debates, it was understandable that every delegation, in particular non-permanent delegations, wanted to leave a footprint, but there were too many open debates and the overall impact thereof had been affected. In the view of one speaker, there had been a very positive evolution towards the use of a wider range of formats. The use of Arria formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues had made it possible to engage the relevant actors in a number of situations, including several in Africa. It was critical for the Council to interact with those shaping and managing political processes on the ground.

It was suggested that visitors from capitals might find meetings of the Council to be too formal and insufficiently interactive. Informal interactive dialogues might work better for such visits. It was asked how a formal statement could be made for the record. It was pointed out that that could only be done in a formal meeting. In informal consultations, the Secretariat prepared a note for the Secretary-General, but it was not in a position to share those notes with Council members. One participant noted that the matter had been vigorously debated by the United Nations Preparatory Commission in 1945.

Concerning "takeaways" from the discussion, it was suggested that the key to having more productive deliberations was to be more interactive. To be more concrete and interactive, pointed out one participant, participants must first listen to each other. In advance of a meeting, a purpose and expected outcome should be identified: priorities should be set to justify the calling of a meeting. The monthly breakfasts among permanent representatives, as initiated by New Zealand, could be used to discuss the substance of upcoming issues before consultations on them were held. Those proposing open debates should take responsibility for preparing a summary and suggesting some recommended actions in order to make them a more valuable experience.

Penholders and inclusiveness

It was proposed, so that all members felt a sense of ownership, that all 15 members be involved in some way in the drafting process related to Council outcomes. In that effort to encourage inclusion, the penholders would bear a particular responsibility and the 10 non-permanent members should meet to consider every product before adoption. The question of when the prerogatives of holding the pen began and ended was not well defined, and it would be best to wield that role in a manner whereby the right of initiative of all members of the Council was recognized, thereby encouraging a spirit of creativity within the Council. According to one participant, document S/2017/507 represented an important step forward towards greater inclusiveness, including in the drafting process. There should be at least one informal consultation before the adoption of any text. The Council now had to implement the provisions of document S/2017/507, which reflected evolving practice and might be adjusted in the future as practice further evolved.

One speaker noted that everyone said "be bold" when it came to taking the pen, but the experience of the speaker has been more mixed, and incoming members should approach this responsibility with some caution, because there might be some opposition to innovative ideas. It depended on circumstances, as it was only natural

that members with special knowledge or geographical proximity might take the pen on certain situations. That had worked out well for them. One discussant pointed to an item on which a permanent and a non-permanent member had recently shared the pen successfully. Another interlocutor commented on the utility of having co-penholders on those issues on which such an arrangement makes substantive sense. It would also be helpful for permanent representatives to be involved earlier in the negotiation and drafting process. The key, commented one participant, was for penholders to take care to work collaboratively, transparently and inclusively.

Missions

It could be very useful for the members of the Council to undertake missions to visit areas of concern, noted one discussant, but the implementation of such missions had been inconsistent. The mission to Chad had yielded valuable insights but was too hectic. The mission to Colombia had been excellent in all respects but there had been some challenges afterwards. The Security Council Affairs Division could provide a service by trying to standardize such missions in the future. It had been political coordinators, not the Division, that had been organizing these missions, commented one speaker. A visit to a single country had advantages, since less time was spent in the air and more with civil society representatives and other actors on the ground. In the view of one interlocutor, such Council missions had been both valuable and a burden. Those to Haiti and South Sudan were excellent and provided both good contacts with actors on the ground and fresh insights. Some other missions had been too hectic and of less value. The Council needed to develop a set of best practices for the organization of such missions.

Council missions, noted one participant, were generally of great value. They provided a chance to hear from a wider range of voices, including those of civil society and local political leaders. They could be both hectic and worthwhile. Sometimes members did not appreciate how difficult they were to organize and how important it was to do them well. Council missions were valuable, commented one discussant, but they could be improved technically. If they were well prepared and well led, added another participant, such missions could be very useful to the work of the Council.

Input and outreach

It was posited that the Council would benefit from more integrated analysis from the Secretariat. The Council's decision-making would be enhanced, in many situations, by a deeper understanding of the development, political and socioeconomic dimensions of a conflict. Given that the Council did not regularly interact with many parts of the United Nations system, it depended on briefings from those in the Secretariat who did have that wider perspective. Likewise, members generally appreciated it when the Secretary-General was relatively bold in his assessments and in sharing his thoughts and ideas for the road ahead. According to another speaker, it was hard to understand root causes without hearing from briefers from different parts of the United Nations system. What could be done to ensure that the Council more regularly received more than one perspective on such matters? Noting a growing tendency to invite representatives of civil society organizations to brief the Council, one participant questioned whether they usually reflected the views of civil society as a whole. Political figures and special representatives of regional arrangements, such as the African Union, were invited to the Council less frequently. Why was that so?

According to one discussant, the Secretary-General did not attend informal consultations as often as he used to. They provided a good opportunity to hear directly from him about the findings from trips he had made and to have a fuller exchange

than was possible at the lunches of Council members with him. Members needed him and he needed them. One participant noted that he had recently invited the Secretary-General to visit the Consultations Room in the near future. One speaker asserted that there had been broad agreement at the workshop on the desirability of briefings and reports incorporating a wider range of perspectives and containing relatively bold and actionable proposals. For the purposes of transparency and inclusion, one participant urged that the websites of Council members include a link to the Security Council Affairs Division website, as their mission had done.

The Council's increasing use of Arria formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues, in the view of one discussant, had permitted it to hear not only from a fuller range of actors from outside the Organization but also from a greater variety of perspectives and voices from within the United Nations system. The practice had extended the members' understanding of critical situations on their agenda. One discussant suggested that it could be useful for the President of the Council to meet with high-ranking representatives of a country before that agenda item was addressed; that should become a more common practice. In that regard, one interlocutor noted that actors in a given situation might meet with the Council either before or after consultations. In the view of one speaker, the President of the Council might arrange for meetings, before considering a situation, not only with officials of the country affected but also with key regional actors, such as the African Union. That was not always easy to accomplish, however.

According to one participant, it had generally been easier to agree to press elements in 2017 than the year before, but there were times when it was difficult to reach such an agreement. In such cases, it would be best to let the President speak to what had occurred. We should trust the President in every case to report in a timely and fair manner. One interlocutor commented that press elements should be treated as the "lowest bar" for outcomes and that the members should have confidence in the President to deliver them. It was unfortunate, in the view of one participant, that some countries only find out that the Council was engaged with a matter through the Journal of the United Nations. It was a sign that the Council needed to do a better job of engaging with more of the parties to situations on its agenda. There were areas, in the view of one discussant, where joint declarations from the Council and the General Assembly should be possible.

Subsidiary bodies

Incoming members, stressed one speaker, should plan ahead for their responsibilities with regard to chairing subsidiary bodies. That should be done on a two-yearly basis, as it would be hard to catch up halfway through one's term. One way to do it, commented one discussant, would be to hold an inaugural meeting to develop a workplan. The "trick" would then be to stick to it. One interlocutor suggested that sanctions committees could do more to engage regional perspectives in their work, in particular with regard to implementation. Consideration should be given to the convening of joint meetings between the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations and the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa. One speaker described the important work of subsidiary bodies as the hidden portion of the Security Council iceberg. Greater cohesion was needed between the work of the subsidiary bodies and that of the Council as a whole. For instance, there could be consideration of the combined work of all of the sanctions committees and greater effort to link what was learned on Council visits to areas of concern with the work of relevant subsidiary bodies. Sometimes, moreover, there were not sufficient interpreters available for all meetings of subsidiary organs.

More attention needed to be devoted to relations between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, in the view of one speaker. One discussant contended that the Council generally did not heed the advice of its advisory bodies and that that was particularly concerning when it came to country configurations of the Commission. Their insights could be valuable to Council deliberations, in particular to the non-permanent members, with their short two-year terms. According to one participant, the Commission had been established in part to provide the Council, with its heavy workload and crisis response orientation, with fresh insights and broader perspectives. Its analytical capacity and connection to the broader membership could be important assets for the work of the Council. There should be more frequent interactive dialogues with the Commission, in particular its country configurations, rather than relying on the less useful briefings by its Chair.

Role of the non-permanent members

One speaker posited that, although procedure may be power, the obstacles were sometimes in members' heads. Newly elected members should be sure that self-limiting assumptions did not get in the way of their taking initiatives. It was unhelpful, in that regard, to frame issues along negative "elected/non-elected" lines. Every member was one fifteenth of the whole. Holding the Presidency conferred real power. Non-permanent members had been able to offer important reforms of working methods, such as the New Zealand initiative on monthly permanent representatives-only breakfasts. In the view of one discussant, the non-permanent members did have a critical role to play in continuing to improve the Council's working methods. However, there were bound to be differences in perspective with some permanent members on questions such as no-objection procedures and how flexible to be on some matters. There were points to be made on both sides and it had generally been possible to find common ground. Every day, noted one participant, decisions were made about setting an agenda, deciding on meeting formats or identifying objectives. There were thus opportunities to "make a difference". The key was not to ask, but to do, as the answers might not be what one wanted to hear.

It was suggested that non-permanent members should be concerned about their legacies, given how quickly a two-year term passed. There were important issues, such as water, peace and security, that should be taken up by newly elected members. One participant pointed out that document S/2017/507 indicated that newly elected members could be invited, at the discretion of the President, to the monthly luncheons with the Secretary-General. That practice should certainly be followed in December. According to one speaker, the non-permanent members could make a larger contribution than they might expect. The only frustration was their 24/7 schedule and the brevity of their terms. There was a huge opportunity for elected members to make a contribution. Personal relationships mattered, which was among the reasons that workshops such as the present one were so valuable.

Session III
Lessons learned: reflections of the class of 2017

Moderator
Ambassador Matthew Rycroft
Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom

Commentators
Ambassador Fodé Seck
Permanent Representative of Senegal

Ambassador Volodymyr Yelchenko
Permanent Representative of Ukraine

Ambassador Elbio Oscar Rosselli Frieri
Permanent Representative of Uruguay

Ambassador Ihab Awad Moustafa
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Ambassador Sebastiano Cardi
Permanent Representative of Italy

Ambassador Koro Bessho
Permanent Representative of Japan

Roles within the Council

Membership in the Council, it was underlined, was not all about one or two presidencies. Nevertheless, they represented critical opportunities, in particular for non-permanent members, to make a difference on a range of issues. Presidents had substantial space and authority when it came to interpreting rules and procedures, but only if they knew them well: prepare well and do not let others tell you what is or is not allowed. Be sure to prioritize, in particular in a busy month, or others will complain that you are needlessly keeping them up at night. Do not organize too many meetings, and prepare carefully for those you do. Chairing subsidiary bodies was also a way for elected members to make a unique contribution. Those bodies were the essence of multilateralism, and required going beyond one's national interests and learning new areas of work. They also required thorough preparation.

It was pointed out that every member served on a large number of subsidiary bodies, including sanctions committees and thematic working groups. Sometimes subsidiary bodies of the Council had had to play a more immediate and direct role in response to a crisis, contributing to a successful outcome. The Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations had productive discussions of the employment of intelligence and new technologies in Mali and elsewhere. That was another area in which incoming members could make a difference. Another speaker stressed the critical role that the President had in dealing with the press and representing the Council to broader public constituencies. It had proved useful for the President to meet with journalists at the beginning of the month to become acquainted and to explain the programme of work for the month ahead. Sometimes there was little to say, but it was still important to signal a willingness to engage and be as open as possible. It could be difficult to gain agreement on press elements, but the President had the responsibility to present them as cogently as circumstances allowed. A wrap-up session with the press at the end of the month might also be advised.

Dynamics within the Council

According to one discussant, there was much scope for elected members to seize the initiative and to contribute to the Council's work. They could make their views count, in particular if they were well prepared and well presented. Before joining the Council, the speaker had heard cautions about whether the five permanent members would allow contributions from newly elected members, but that proved to be a false dichotomy. There had always been a way to work with the permanent members, even when they had different viewpoints. When the permanent members were divided, it could make it difficult to contribute, but there was always a way to do so, even in trying times. The key lesson was not to be easily frustrated. It was not a case of the "powerless 10" versus the "powerful 5", as the elected members could play an essential role as bridge builders. For instance, non-permanent members had played a major part in producing resolution 2286 (2016), in which the Council condemned attacks on hospitals and other medical facilities.

One speaker suggested that document S/2017/507 provided an answer to those who questioned whether the 10 elected members could make a difference. Under the stewardship of Japan, it was developed largely through the lenses of the non-permanent members and now the five permanent members also see it as a useful achievement. The elected members had also taken the initiative to help mend fences among the permanent members on the question of chemical weapons in Syria. Although the elected 10 was still an evolving grouping, it had demonstrated that its input was important to the functioning of the Council. The three African members of the Council — were also emerging as a significant group. They were improving their coordination and speaking with a single voice when possible, in particular on matters pertaining to the African continent. They had been encouraging the deepening relationship between the Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, whose most recent joint meeting was a success.

It was said that the permanent members had a lot to learn from the elected members as well, since everyone faced a learning curve. The five had been learning from the original perspectives of the 10, from their personal styles and from their drive for innovation, as the latter were not trapped by institutional memory and tradition. There was space to make a difference. It was through collective teamwork and spirit that the Council had the best prospects for maintaining its relevance to a changing international security environment. The non-permanent members had brought important insights to peacekeeping, as many of them were significant troop- and/or police-contributing countries, to prevention and to collaborating with regional arrangements.

The key to the Council's effectiveness, according to another interlocutor, lay in the unity of the members. Working together, they could bring broad and diverse perspectives to bear on the challenges facing the Council. There were many groupings within the Council, including the four countries from the European Union and the goal was to make all of those "engines" go in the same direction at the same time. The current and ongoing members of the Council were counting on the incoming members to bring fresh perspectives to the work of the Council. It was true, added another participant, that the permanent representatives generally got on well even beyond the confines of the Council. Personal chemistry, however, was only part of the formula for making the Council succeed. There needed to be a broader and deeper shared understanding of the challenges confronting the Council. It operated in a world without traffic lights or police officers, so the incoming members would need to help forge a successful path ahead, with little guidance.

Partners

Service on the Council, it was said, was inevitably a humbling experience. Given the expectations people had for the Council and the daunting nature of its mandate, one could not possibly have known everything or have experienced everything that the assignment required. Most members did not have embassies everywhere, and it was very difficult to understand what local people thought in every situation. It was essential, therefore, to draw on the knowledge base and experience of other Council members, as well as those of others outside the Council. One discussant pointed out that incoming members should be prepared to address a wide range of situational and thematic issues, some of which might not be followed closely by their capitals. Service on the Council, therefore, could have the effect of broadening the scope of national foreign policies. This was one of the benefits of Council visits to different parts of the world, as they could be excellent learning exercises.

In the view of one participant, there had been a number of situations in which it had proved helpful for the Council to collaborate with subregional arrangements

working through regional arrangements. Examples had included the Economic Community of West African States, in several situations, and IGAD, which had contributed to efforts to try to resolve the conflict in South Sudan. Having participated in half a dozen missions to the field, the speaker found them to be immensely valuable, although there was room for improvement in their organization and logistics. The Council could make a stronger effort to interact with other organs concerned with different aspects of international security, including the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court. The parallel resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly on sustaining peace — Council resolution 2282 (2016) and Assembly resolution 70/262, respectively — suggested the possibility of closer collaboration between those two principal organs, as well as the value of a wider understanding of the potential scope of peacebuilding.

According to one speaker, permanent representatives were expected to know more than either their capitals or their staffs about the issues before the Council. Even if that was not literally true, it was important to act as if it was so. That was the role expected of a leader of a delegation represented on the Council. Policymakers "at home" needed to feel that they had to consult with you about matters before the Council. It was necessary to maintain the credibility of one's delegation in one's capital, although that did not preclude checking with leading figures in the capital when necessary: things happen, so watch your back. That balance between New York and the capital could be difficult to maintain, but it was essential. Occasionally, officials of the United Nations, such as force commanders, might contact your capital. That should not be allowed, as their place was to carry out the mandate given them by the Council, not to lobby capitals.

The Security Council Affairs Division could be an invaluable partner, stressed one interlocutor. That was especially true during the first six months on the Council and in preparation for assuming the Presidency. The Division had a wealth of knowledge and experience, and incoming members should not hesitate to seek its input on both substantive and procedural matters as frequently as needed. Likewise, the Security Council Report had emerged as a core avenue for transparency and a reliable and confidential source for information and analysis. Incoming members should therefore keep in contact and engage with both groups on a regular basis, as they could help to shed light on the political, procedural and substantive dynamics of the Council.

One speaker commented that it was not evident how they would have survived their term on the Council without the support of the Division. Its input and advice had been invaluable. The Security Council Report also played a critical role in assisting incoming members, who had increasingly come to rely on that independent group for information, advice and guidance. It would have been difficult to manage without it, as well. One interlocutor added that the Security Council Report had been invited to come to that interlocutor's capital to brief the annual gathering of their Ambassadors during the weeks prior to joining the Council. That initiative had worked well, and others might want to emulate it in the future.

Meetings

Open meetings, in the view of one discussant, offered a chance for non-permanent members to shine. However, it was important to listen to those invited to speak and to "digest" what they had to say. In planning an open debate, it was essential to think about producing an outcome that would make a real contribution, so that the whole effort was worthwhile. Informal interactive dialogues provided a chance to engage more deeply with a subject and to collect a broader set of views. Arria formula meetings were useful for similar reasons. In both cases, however, it was important to maintain a well-defined focus and purpose. All three formats offered

opportunities for incoming members to make real contributions, if they were employed effectively and thoughtfully.

One speaker suggested that a sequence of meetings, employing different formats, had helped forward the issue of water, peace and security. An initial Arria formula meeting had provided the context and helped to generate interest in the subject. An open debate, building on that initial exchange, had then allowed more delegations to participate, and drew additional attention to the topic. The open debate brought more attention in capitals and public circles. Now it was a question of how much follow-up effort the Council would put into it. One discussant called for greater use of maps in Council deliberations and consultations. Maps were essential to understanding the dynamics of a situation and the place of different actors in a conflict or potential conflict. Yet there were rarely maps in the consultation room, and too few briefers made any use of them. What was needed were big, relevant and easy-to-read maps.

Advice to newly elected members

The overarching goal of all incoming members, underlined one speaker, was to make a contribution. How that could be measured after 24 months was uncertain and probably varied from one delegation to the next. But the critical measure was how one felt about what was accomplished at that juncture, given all of the factors that could not be controlled and might not have been anticipated. It was critical, in that regard, to know one's constituencies and to gauge the extent to which their interests were served, as well as one's own. After two years on the Council, you would be back in the Assembly and seeking their help on some matters. One participant pointed out that work on the Council could be frustrating and it was important not to become too discouraged or disappointed if outcomes did not always meet one's aspirations and expectations. Council resolution 2286 (2016), in which attacks on hospitals and other medical facilities were condemned, was a case in point. A year later, those attacks had escalated, but it was still right that the Council had spoken out on the matter, even if the immediate results were dismaying. The lesson was not to despair and not to give up. It was essential that incoming members remained committed to moving forward.

It was reported that, at a previous "Hitting the ground running" workshop, a speaker had told the incoming members to focus on four things: other members of the Council; issues; the Secretariat; and instructions from capitals — or "MISC" for short. That had proved to be good advice. Newly elected members should be bold, as each had won election to the Council because they could bring something to it. The Council should continue to try to improve its working methods and all the members could contribute to that effort. That was essential to enhancing the Council's capacity to resolve conflicts and to advance peace. The Council had success stories, such as in Liberia and the Gambia, but needed to become more adept at getting the word out. Members could be proud of the Council's contributions to a successful outcome in the latter situation.

One participant cautioned that incoming members should pay attention to the footnotes in the programme of work, as well as to things "written in invisible ink", since there seemed to be new procedural questions every day. Each country brought a range of priorities and expertise to the Council, but in joining the Council they become an integral part of a wider body with the broader mission of maintaining international peace and security. It was important to keep active and creative. The degree to which permanent representatives were engaged in drafting varied from mission to mission, so it was essential for political coordinators and experts to be very active and engaged. The Council was not a closed shop and it was best to stay open to the wider United Nations membership and to reach out to the countries that were being addressed in the Council.

One discussant observed that things changed slowly in the Council and that many of the concerns voiced in the present workshop had been raised before. The only choice was to keep pushing and never to give up. A key to a successful tenure was the organization of one's team, with very strong political coordinators and a good system of backups. Permanent representatives had administrative and representational duties in addition to spending 50 hours a month in the Chamber, so time management was always a pressing matter. At the outset, one may try to go to every meeting, but one learned to be more selective, prioritizing those that mattered most. Political priorities may be clearer than time management priorities. With limited personnel, one had to adjust, because Murphy's law appeared to be in effect ("what can go wrong will go wrong"). Both political coordinators could fall ill at the same time, compelling one to scramble. Also, be wary of the "hamster syndrome": running, running, running but feeling that one was not getting anywhere, as things would then suddenly move forward. Prepare, manage, adapt and keep pushing. Be steadfast. When you feel strongly about an issue, never give up.

One speaker presented a list of 24 pieces of advice for incoming members, one for every month in a term, as follows:

(1) One's time on the Council is limited, as two years just fly by;

(2) Set priorities and pursue them relentlessly;

(3) Plan ahead, do not wait for an opportune moment, just create one;

(4) Do not be intimidated by the gravity of an item on the agenda;

(5) Do not stress over the opportunity to serve as President; in 2018 four newly elected members will serve as President from February to May;

(6) Do not be shy about asking for advice before assuming the Presidency;

(7) "Pick the brains" of the staff of the Security Council Affairs Division, they are reliable allies and have a great deal of knowledge;

(8) Prepare an outline of your Presidency about two months in advance;

(9) Educate your capital about the work of the Council and manage their expectations;

(10) Try to keep open debates as narrow as possible, keeping the focus on what you think is important;

(11) When you are President, keep a full grasp of all the issues likely to come up that month;

(12) Your term on the Council is about much more than the Presidency, so look for other ways to contribute;

(13) Know the rules of procedure, including for subsidiary bodies, as the time invested in studying them will be well spent;

(14) Keep your Minister well informed of developments related to the Council, so that she/he does not learn about them from her/his counterparts;

(15) If you chair a subsidiary body with a country-specific mandate, take time to build a relationship with that country's permanent representative;

(16) For the sake of predictability and transparency, do not launch any surprising initiatives without laying the political groundwork first;

(17) Develop and maintain as wide a network as possible, going well beyond those who reach out to you;

(18) Maintain regular contacts with the non-governmental organization community;

(19) View informal meetings of various sorts as valuable opportunities to exchange information with your colleagues;

(20) Remember that Council practices are not set in stone; they can be changed with creativity and patience;

(21) Avoid making lengthy and flowery remarks, as "clear and concise" are attributes appreciated in the Council;

(22) Value the work of your Council team, who work long hours, and show your appreciation;

(23) Delegate responsibilities within your team, make full use of your deputy permanent representatives and political coordinators, and recognize that you cannot do everything yourself;

(24) Embrace the challenges of membership because, although the work can be daunting, demanding and frustrating, it is ultimately enormously rewarding.

And, yes, do not forget to review the footnotes to the monthly programme of work.

In conclusion, one participant reminded the incoming members that no one at the workshop had said anything about aiming lower, doing less or saying less. All of the advice had been quite the opposite: aim higher, do more and be bold and visible.

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Security Council
Seventy-third year

Culture of peace

Prevention of armed conflict

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

Letter dated 30 April 2018 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

China is the current Chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the statement by the Heads of States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on joint action to counter international terrorism (see annex), which was issued at the seventeenth meeting of the Council of Heads of States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, held in Astana on 9 June 2017.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 15, 34, 109 and 118, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Ma** Zhaoxu
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

18-07620 (E) 140518 150518

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Annex to the letter dated 30 April 2018 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General*

[Original: Chinese and Russian]

Statement by the Heads of State of the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on joint action to counter international terrorism

We, the Heads of State of the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, note with great concern that international terrorism continues to present a growing global threat to States' peace, security and sovereignty.

We resolutely condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and emphasize that efforts to counter international terrorism, and cooperation in counter-terrorism, must be conducted in strict compliance with the goals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the universally accepted norms of international law, with the United Nations and the United Nations Security Council in a central coordinating role.

We call on all States to implement in their entirety the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council, and the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

We wish to emphasize once again that, in working to achieve effective action against international terrorism on the basis of the rule of law, we consider violations of the principles of State sovereignty, equality of rights and territorial integrity, and non-interference in States' internal affairs, to be inadmissible, and that the use of terrorist and extremist groups to further political and geopolitical objectives is absolutely unacceptable.

We note the increasing threats to global security caused by growing activity on the part of terrorist organizations, a situation which will increase tension in the area covered by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

We reaffirm our common commitment to countering the variety of organizations and groups recognized as terrorist or extremist in nature in the territories of any of the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

We acknowledge the importance of further strengthening international cooperation in countering terrorism, and call on the international community to unite in a broad counter-terrorism coalition to combat global terrorism, which is causing destabilization and increasing tension in individual States and entire regions, including the area covered by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

We support the holding of international high-level meetings on Syria within the Astana process as a vital adjunct to the intra-Syrian talks in Geneva, and encourage broad participation on the part of the international community. We hope that the agreements reached in the framework of the Astana process will lend positive impetus to the political settlement of the Syrian crisis under the auspices of the United Nations as part of the Geneva process in accordance with Security Council resolution 2254 (2015).

We emphasize the need for collective action to counter the spread of terrorist and extremist ideology, including action to prevent and block terrorist and extremist

* The annex is being circulated in Chinese, English and Russian only.

propaganda, incitement to terrorism and extremism, and recruitment, by the Internet and other means. It is also important to agree action to be applied to individuals returning to the territories of the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization after taking part in the actions of international terrorist organizations as foreign terrorist fighters.

We regard as inadmissible any public justification of terrorism aimed at incitement to commit or commission of terrorist acts, including justification taking the form of statements by politicians or officials, and we call for closer international cooperation in that connection. We support the proposal of the Russian Federation for a draft Security Council resolution on countering the spread of terrorist ideology, to build on the provisions of the pertinent Security Council resolution 1624 (2005).

We declare that terrorist attacks committed by individuals or groups associating themselves with a particular religion or convictions must never serve as the pretext for intolerance towards persons on grounds of their religious affiliation.

We believe it wholly unacceptable to associate terrorism with any religion, and resolutely condemn all manifestations of intolerance, discrimination or violence with regard to Christians, Muslims or representatives of other faiths.

Recognising that States and their competent authorities play the determining role in countering terrorism and extremism, and in any international cooperation in that regard, we believe that to repel terrorist and extremist threats effectively, and to strengthen civil immunity to radical ideas, State efforts must be supplemented by the potential of public structures, the media, religious communities, and educational and research institutions in the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

We are convinced that terrorism cannot be countered effectively unless the sources of its funding are definitively cut off, as required by the pertinent resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council, and by the international standards of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

With regard to the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015), we advocate rapidly launching efforts to identify natural and legal persons engaged in economic relations with terrorist organizations, in order to put an end to their criminal activities.

We believe that the maintenance of stability in the States members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization will be furthered by continuing to develop cooperation within the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Organization and the expansion of practical counter-terrorism collaboration between States at political level, in intelligence services and the pertinent ministries and departments.

We confirm our shared resolve to promote other multilateral and bilateral interaction in the interests of countering international terrorism effectively.

Astana, 9 June 2017